



# • ENTREPRENEURS • CANADA



Canada 

Specialised immigration  
services are available for  
entrepreneurs

Manufacturing, new technology, and tourism-development projects are especially favoured. Small-scale retail businesses may not be encouraged if the business sector is already crowded and has a high failure rate.

That being said, the emphasis in evaluating an application is on the background and business experience of the applicant; we do not expect somebody with a successful track record in business to enter into a project that is not viable.

*Which areas, geographically, do you consider offer the best prospects for the development of a new business?*

The different regions of Canada offer a range of special advantages and opportunities. The Atlantic provinces, though they suffer from the highest unemployment levels in Canada, are all experiencing good economic growth, buoyed by offshore oil and gas discoveries. Entrepreneurs will be especially interested in businesses relating to this sector.

Ontario and Quebec, the manufacturing heartland of Canada, have diversified economies that offer every sort of business opportunity. Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta are encouraging all types of small and medium sized businesses. And British Columbia's natural resources, combined with its climate and lifestyle, attract many entrepreneurs.

*How do you define an entrepreneur?*

According to the Immigration Regulations, an entrepreneur is someone who intends (and has the ability) to establish, purchase or make a substantial investment in a business or commercial venture in Canada, which will make a significant contribution to the economy and which will offer job opportunities for one or more Canadian citizens or permanent residents.

Also, it is someone who intends (and has the ability) to provide active and on-going participation in the management of the business or commercial venture.

*Are self-employed people covered by the programme?*

Yes. They are defined as people who intend (and have the ability) to establish a business in Canada, which will contribute to the economy or to the cultural and/or artistic life of Canada, but which will employ only the applicant.

This category would therefore cover people such as sports personalities, artists, members of the performing arts, farmers, operators of small businesses that certain communities may need, and so on.

*How would an entrepreneur or self-employed person apply for emigration? What steps are involved, and how long does the process take?*

From the date of formal application, the whole process can take two to six months, depending upon individual circumstances.

When making a formal application, the entrepreneur is asked to submit details of his or her background in business, plus details of investment funds and business plans. At this stage the business plan need not be well developed; we would prefer to give applicants an early decision in principle, based on their background and funds, before they expend a lot of effort developing a business proposal.

In some cases, when an applicant has an outstanding track record and above average funds, conditional admission to Canada can be arranged. In this case the applicant would have up to two years to set up a suitable business.

A formal selection interview with an immigration officer is arranged, usually about one month from receipt of the application. At the interview, we are usually able to advise applicants whether they appear to meet the programme requirements. If the decision is positive, the business proposal is then referred to officials of the province of destination for their comments. At this stage, applicants who have not formulated concrete business plans are encouraged to make exploratory trips to Canada and will be assisted in arranging appointments with appropriate officials in Canada.

In the case of Quebec, which has an agreement with the federal government on immigrant selection, officials of the Quebec Immigration Service make the immigration selection decision. The other provinces simply provide advice on whether the application fits in with their business development priorities and whether the proposal appears to be viable. All applicants must also pass federal medical and background checks.